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TRANSPARENCY

On our cover: St. Jerome in his study by Durer reprinted with the permission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

Volume 37, Number 4 August 1986

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MEDITATION

TRANSPARENCY

We have all met people who seem to shine. People with a quality of radiance, who make us think of God, give us a sense of the presence that lights the universe. We hear their words, and we know that this is what it means to be with God, alive in God. We see the fire in their eyes, and remember a shimmering mirror that glows as though lit from within.

This kind of transparency arises in only those people who pray. It may come softly like a crescent moon, or like a lightning flash, or blazing like the sun on gold. Prayer opens a field of vision, releases a new ability to see, and to be seen. We learn to look at things with an inner eye, the eye of the contemplative whose vision penetrates to the heart of Reality, perceives the Truth, refuses to be shut out again by the iron gates of anger, anxiety, or guilt. "No more sin!" cried Catherine of Genoa, when she encountered the Light and longed to reflect its clarity: no more of that which caused her to lose the Light.

Transparency is a quality of the cosmos, too. People who pray describe a Light "lighter than the light," sweeping across the darknesses of space of time, filling the emptiness, enlightening the world. "It will flame out like shining from shook foil," Hopkins wrote: across the abyss of unconsciousness, the sea of ignorance, to enkindle the little spark of divinity glimmering in every man and woman's heart.

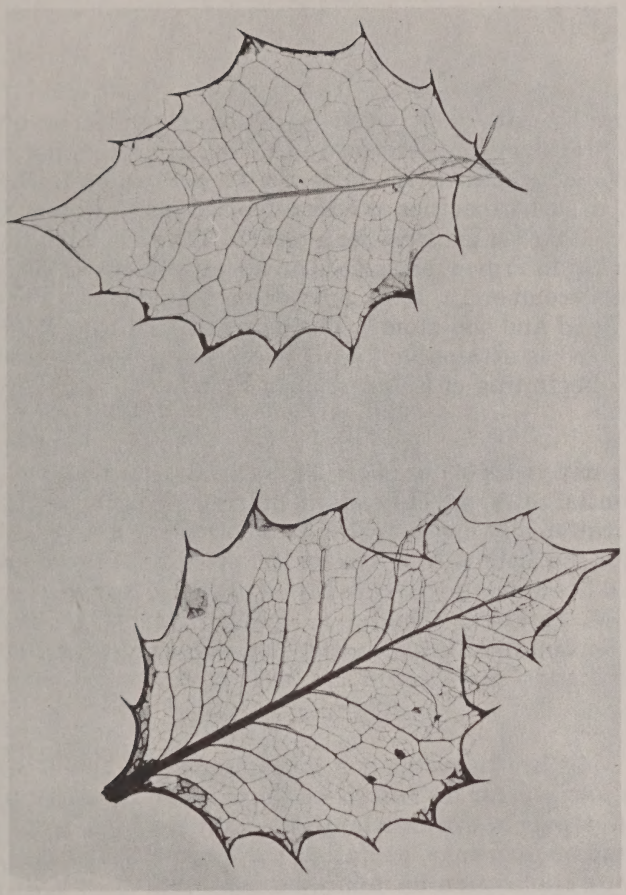
The opposite of transparency is neither depression nor despair. Its opposite is density: a coal-black impenetrability unwilling to see the Light, or bear the loving beams. Some people fear spaciousness, as though opening meant shattering like a pane of glass. Still others fear pain or vulnerability. So they resist the advance of God, build rigid defenses as though they were a battleground, fight every flash of insight until it would seem that nothing can enter in.

But God never abandons people afraid to be free. As Origen wrote, the artist chips away at the wood until what is hiding there begins to shine. Just so would God sculpt away at our density, until our real nature began to gleam. We need only lay down our arms, and let the holy work go on.

* * * * *

The word "transparency" has reappeared in our time in spirituality, religious studies, spiritual direction, and interfaith dialogue. The contents of this edition of "Fellowship in Prayer" come to you from all of these fields, offering you ways to live in the Light of God.

MFG



MISS KATHRYN BROWN RETIRES

We announce with great regret the retirement of Kathryn G. Brown from the presidency of Fellowship In Prayer. Co-founder with Carl Evans of our organization, Miss Brown served us faithfully and tirelessly in such capacities as Executive Secretary, Editor, and President of the Board of Trustees for a total of 37 years. With the founder of Fellowship In Prayer, she placed an advertisement in the New York Times on December 12, 1949, answering an article by Ferris Booth entitled "God and the atom." The ad was headlined, Prayer is the answer . . . it is attainable." This event is generally considered to mark the beginning of Fellowship In Prayer.

In the early years of our organization, Miss Brown played a variety of essential roles, not only administering the office, and preparing the publication, but also travelling and lecturing extensively to gain friends for the Fellowship. Among the prominent people whom she interested in our work were the Eli Lily family, Anna Grace Sawyer, Mrs. A. M. Davison, Pauline A. Taylor, Harry Halsey Starrett, Mildred Seydell, and Frances Rideout, who suggested that Durer's "Praying Hands" be used on the cover of our publication.

Today Miss Brown occupies a small house filled with mementoes of the Fellowship: Mr. Evans' collection of handcarved elephants, fine old china, a pair of Chinese lanterns, Chinese rugs, paintings, and scrolls, and photographs, as well as the original Varityper on which she set our publication for many years.

We suspect that Miss Brown will be as active in retirement as before, enjoying more time for such favorite pastimes as gardening and preparing dinner parties for her friends. We are grateful that she will continue to work with us as a member of the Board.

The Board of Trustees, the Editor, Executive Secretary, and staff of Fellowship In Prayer extend to Kathryn Brown warmest wishes for many joys and blessings in retirement. We take pride in our long and fruitful association with her, and acknowledge with admiration and affection her irreplaceable gifts of courage, faith, and wisdom.

INSIGHTS

In his last words to his disciples, the Buddha said, "Make of yourself a light."

When the mirror has been wiped and gazed into for a long time, a kind of splendour of divine light begins to shine in it, and a great beam of unexpected vision appears to the eyes.

Richard of Saint-Victor

One needs Thy Light to see Thee.

Fakhruddin 'Iraqi

Pride sheds darkness upon our souls.

Catherine of Siena

If what was promised does not occur, then that must not make you doubt the promise. Otherwise your intellect will be obscured and the light of your innermost heart extinguished.

Ibn 'Ata'illah

Fight yourself, and you need not trouble about any other foe.

Catherine of Genoa

Our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12.29

Where mind and desire end, in that darkness shines God.

Meister Eckhart

Called or uncalled, God is always present.

Jung

坐禪圖

坐久忽所知忽覺月在地
泠泠天風來蓦然到肝脏
俯視一泓水淙淙無物散
中有戴鮮逐黙黙自相契

無事此靜坐一日如兩日
若活七十年便是百四十
靜坐少思寡欲寡心養氣存神
此是修真要訣學者可以書紳

Dreams Can Lead Us To God

TRANSPARENT DREAMS

by

Elizabeth Lally

What is a dream? What happens to us when we leave off with waking life? Since Freud, the mainstream of opinion has held dreams to be expressions of desire. But as Jung knew, the dream state reveals far more than a working out of subconscious wishes. He cites a dream in which a winged being bearing four keys gives him instruction on thoughts that Jung had believed were self-created. This being, whom he calls Philemon, tells him that thoughts are like animals, trees, or people in a room. "If you see people in a room." Philemon says, "you would not think you had made those people, or that you were responsible for them." Perhaps the same analogy can be given to the kind of dreaming that brings us into the presence of guides and teachers who make the more opaque aspects of God transparent: we do not create these dream-figures; they are gifts.

The word transparent derives from the Latin roots *trans,* meaning across, on the other side of, and *parere,* to appear. The etymology provides a clue to the workings of dreams in which we see what appears from the other side of physical reality.

Consider scriptures. Daniel literally saves his life and the lives of his companions on the basis of a night vision that explains Nebuchadnezzar's dream, a dream none of the wise had understood and so were threatened with execution. Daniel also interprets the fate of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, when the king dreams of the tree of life grown from the center of the earth. A "watcher, a holy one"

Elizabeth Lally is a writer who makes her home in Princeton, N.J.

descends from heaven and declares the tree is to be cut, stripped, and scattered, by decree of "the watchers." Consider Solomon, who asks for a discerning mind to govern the multitudes, and hears the voice of God in a dream assuring him of help, precisely because he asked for it.

We have also the example of dreams given to Joseph and the three wise men to protect the infant Jesus from Herod. The wise men are warned in a dream not to return home through Herod's country. Following their departure, Joseph dreams of an angel of the Lord instructing him to take the child and Mary into Egypt, and there to await further word. The angel appears again after Herod's death, telling Joseph in a dream to take Jesus and his mother back to Israel.

Who are these angels and watchers? By what power does God become transparent to those who ask in earnest and, like Daniel, seek diligently to understand the visions of the night? These are the angels of the Lord, in whose many forms we as people of God may receive guidance and instruction, if only we ask specifically and persistently. Take the example of literature.

In "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man," Dostoevsky writes in first person of the night he planned a suicide prevented by a faulty revolver. He cries out of desperation for help and falls into a deep sleep, exhausted. In a dream a guide appears to awaken his soul while his body lies inert, and commands the soul to follow on a journey through the starry skies, to an Edenic Landscape peopled by beings who spend their lives praising God and one another. He speaks with them, learns of their origins, and then witnesses the decline of their civilization in the span of a few moments. Here he receives warning against hatred unto death.

A Midsummer Night's Dream closes with an epilogue wherein Puck begs pardon for the turmoil that has confounded and caused pain:

> If we shadows have offended,
> Think but this, and all is mended:
> That you have but slumb'red here,
> While these visions did appear . . .
> If you pardon, we will mend.

The message holds a truth that dreams mend, heal, and adjust for the derision encountered in waking life. It is a truth clear to those whose lives have been so adjusted, thanks to God's transparent helps sent through the dream state.

These dreams appeared to me in connection with Dostoevsky's story. Before reading the story, I learned that he spent several years imprisoned in Siberia for treason, and years after in debt for compulsive gambling. The man suffered. For reasons unknown to me, I could not relinquish his suffering, and so asked before sleeping for guidance in the matter. A dream presented itself. Dostoevsky stood before me in St. Petersburg at a white marble fountain with a golden winged

fish carved into its base. I took the fish from the fountain and followed him running through the city, through a labyrinth of stone streets and into an apartment with luminous green carpets and green walls. There I handed him the winged creature, hoping it might comfort or encourage him. I awoke knowing that God had revealed to me a parable about mending that which disquiets.

More immediately, I have often asked for guidance in my work. With each request, God has become more transparent to me. One night I asked for a specific inspiration, and dreamt of a wheel attended by an angel calling herself Therese. The spokes of the wheel were of cherubims who spun round so quickly they grew to be a sheer mass of light. I heard a voice instructing me to remember this light, and to make use of it working.

On the evidence at hand, it seems imperative that when we approach God for night instruction, we must call on the invisible helpers—the angels, the watchers— to remove our more opaque ways of perceiving reality. If God is to become transparent to us in dreams, to appear from the other side of the physical world, we must be willing to accept the mysterious or unusual forms the transparency takes. This means adjusting for signs or symbols that seem wholly removed from the familiar or comfortable. It means adjusting our perceptions of what is real, being ready to take seriously a state of consciousness in which we may be far more active, and certainly more receptive than the five senses allow. And finally, it means giving credence to dreams whereby God takes away the glass we see through darkly, and presents the divine Self so clearly that we become transparent to ourselves; to the image in which we are made.

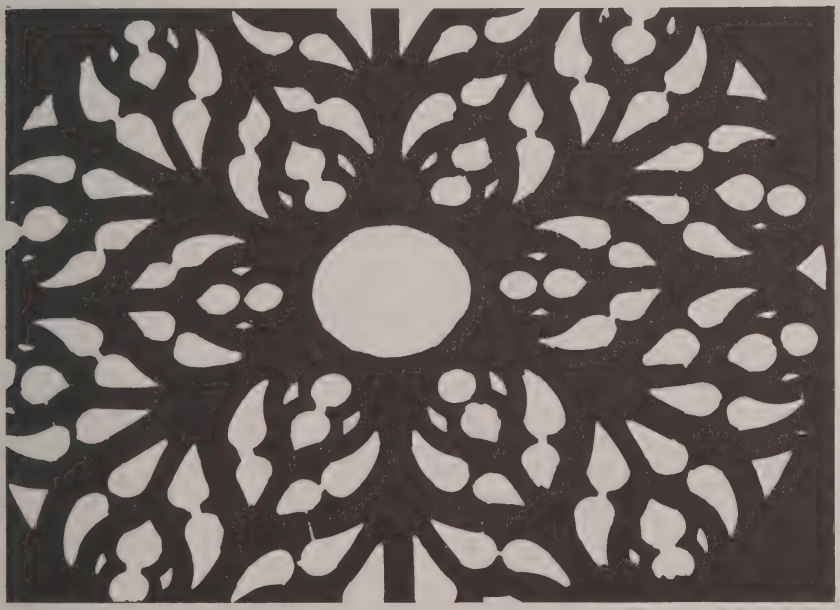
This is the image we call the soul, whose agency is most active in dreams of a higher order. By calling on the soul to work for us at night, to seek guidance and remember it, we call on that part of ourselves with greatest access to realities beyond everyday cognition. As it is with God, the soul is unbounded by commonplace notions of time, space, and possibility. Perhaps, as it was with Dostoevsky, the soul travels distances at night, and if asked to, ascends to a God whose property is to reveal the invisible, the transparent signs of the heavenly kingdom.

One of these is the Christ. I turn again to my own experience, to dreams of Jesus as he has appeared at times crucial to the development of my soul's learning. In one instance, when confronted with a life-threatening illness, I dreamt of a Victorian mansion whose interior was thick with an aroma resembling incense. A guide showed me a passage to a cellar I found to be of ancient origins. The walls, dark and cave-like, supported torches hung from iron rings. At the center of the room was a stone altar where Christ lay, burnished bronze. He arose from the altar, handed me a knife, and said it could never hurt me. I awoke, knowing the threat of illness was less real

than the presence of the one whose power to heal would abide.

When the healing was complete, I dreamt of the same bronzed Christ in an adobe chapel where I found myself seeking him. He pointed to the cross hung over a wooden altar, and instructed me to carry it out into a field where an angel received it, reminding me to pray without ceasing.

Were Jesus and his angel creations of my wishes? I think not. He and the heavenly hosts are God's creations, transparent because they pervade the universe in the same way the winds and the air we breathe pervade our dwelling on earth. If we only ask to partake of this transparency, which is of the kingdom, our dreams will answer by the same power that gave us souls. Ask and you receive. Ask for practical guidance, or for instruction concerning your destiny. Write down your dreams when you awake, and watch for patterns that recur: they will establish unequivocal direction. And the God whose purpose is truth, whose character is love, shall become so clear to you as to be transparent.



JOGGING IS EASY, WALKING IS TOUGH

by

Cullen I.K. Story

If you look through the first chapter of John's gospel with me, you may agree that the really important statement is to be found in the words, "walk in the light". John uses the word "walk" to refer to those who have been made alive in Jesus. After all, in our world, it is the person who survives without impairment of the body who can walk. The person whom Jesus makes alive is the one who can walk. The daughter of Jairus began to walk after Jesus spoke to her in Aramaic, *Talitha cumi:* daughter, rise up. The paralytics at Bethesda and Galilee only walked when they heard the words of Jesus, "rise and walk." So it is with Paul in Ephesians. In the first part of his letter, he tells his readers that though they were once dead in sin, God made them alive. He says then at the end of the letter, "walk worthy of the calling, wherein you have been called; walk in love; walk as children of light." I still recall the joy it was for Wilma and myself when we witnessed each one of our three sons begin to walk. What a joyous occasion for each and for us!

John tells us to walk in the light. Walking is the simplest form of forward movement known to us. So John uses the idea of walking as the simplest example of Christian life. *To walk in the light means to come to the light.* God is light; walk in the light. It sounds easy, doesn't it? Some people say Christianity is easy—there's life, fellowship with God, fellowship with one another. But to walk in the light is both a serious venture and a humbling experience. John says that God is light and there is not a speck of darkness in him. To walk in the light means to walk with one who is pure, completely holy; and that can only mean the painful exposure of all that is dark within us, for what fellowship can light have with darkness?

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To walk in the light means to come to the light. We get a hint as to what this means in Jesus' call to Simon Peter; after a fruitless night of fishing and after a great catch of fish was taken at Jesus' command, Peter falls down at Jesus' knees and says, "Depart from me, I'm a sinful man, Oh Lord." Certainly Peter didn't want Jesus to go, but he realized that Jesus' miracle revealed not only that he was lord of all and that he could summon the fish in Galilee to a given place

and a given time, but that he was the Holy One and his bright presence exposes the weak and sinful nature of men and women.

You remember the story of the woman taken in adultery and how the religious leaders bring her to Jesus to trap him; and Jesus replied, "Let the one without sin cast the first stone." He writes in the sand. What he writes in the sand is probably the same thing that he spoke.

So through the two channels of ear and eye, Jesus exposes the basic need of the woman's accusers. They hear and they see the words, "Let the one who is without sin cast the first stone," words that are like a bright light shining in the innermost recesses of the hearts of the people. So, one by one, unable to bear the light, one by one they leave until Jesus and the woman are left. There is, to be sure, the triumph of grace over the woman's sin. But there is also a tragedy. Her accusers refuse the light of the world and continue to stumble on in the darkness which they themselves created. And that is precisely so often true of our own behavior.

Oliver Wendell Holmes in his **Autocrat of the Breakfast Table** describes an experience common to many. When you walk through a field, says Holmes, you come across a large, flat stone, which has probably been in that place for years. You have the urge to turn the stone over, and you do. What do you find? You discover a small community of rather hideous looking things: black, glossy crickets, slug-like creatures, turtle bugs. What happens when that stone is turned over and the light of day focuses on that underground community? Well, says Holmes, all of those creatures who have legs (and most of them have plenty of legs) rush around in a general stampede bumping into whatever comes in their way, making their way into an underground retreat away from that region which for them is now "poisoned" by the sunshine.

We are told in John's gospel that the light has come into the world and men and women have loved darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. Walk in the light means to come to the light; it means the painful unveiling of our own darkness. At the seminary I attended in Texas, chapel attendance was encouraged but not required. I remember one day in particular when I decided I had something more important to do than go to chapel...afterwards when I went to class I overheard two of my fellow students talking about the chapel service and how meaningful it had been in their lives. I, in order to avoid embarrassment and an explanation, tried to make sure that no one knew I had missed chapel. About that time I remembered the fellow by the name of Thomas who took a chapel cut on the evening of the resurrection and missed seeing the risen Lord.

Walk in light says John. Sometimes this may mean unveiling an overt wrong which tends to plague and destroy one's life of usefulness in the world. In a community I once served, a young man came to visit my office once a week — I could count on Jim being there once a week — and it soon came out that he was a homosexual. There was no specialist to whom I could send him, I did what I could; I listened to him, I counselled with him. He seemed to want help and yet he seemed to want to cling to his lifestyle. We usually closed each visit with scripture and prayer. Once I asked him what verses he wanted

me to read and he immediately replied that he liked the Book of Revelation, so we turned to Revelation, Chapter one. What a chapter it was, I thought, to my friend Jim, for in that chapter John has a vision of the purity and holiness of Christ, the whiteness and brightness of the Son of God, and John, his apostle, can't stand and he falls down at his feet as one who is dead. I prayed for Jim in my office that day that he too would come to the light of his wrong, to the only one who could do anything about it.

Walk in the light. It is human nature to avoid the light of God, with our thoughts as well as with our words and deeds. Some of us may have a nagging temper that dulls our witness, a spirit of jealousy, or simply living without concern for a life with God in prayer and service to others. Let me say very clearly that this chapter includes all of us; the writer even includes himself. Do you notice that little phrase that says, "If *we* say we have fellowship with him, if *we* say we have not sinned." This is not the preacher or pastor pointing his finger at the congregation. To be sure, John is preacher and John is pastor, but he is conscious of his tendency no less than his people to escape the brightness of the light of God.

Several times I have had a chance to be in a meeting with Alcoholics Anonymous. The room is usually so blue with smoke that you can cut it with a knife, but in the room I've had the refreshing experience of the honesty of people...as one after another they open their lives to others and tell what alcohol has done to them. And as they tell, they are pleading for the support of their fellows and praying to God that somehow they will have the strength to live day by day without alcohol.

Walk in the light says John, for only light can have fellowship with him. Walk in the light says John, for it is in the light that we can have fellowship with one another. Your need and my need is very real. In order to come to the light, we need to come in all of our dishonesty with all our guilt and shame, the nagging temper, the vindictive spirit, the jealousy that so often possesses us. And as we bring these things to the light, nothing looks any better, rather all seems to look worse. To walk in the light not only means to come to the light, but means cleansing by the blood of Jesus. Cleansing is the very heart of the gospel, in 1st John 1. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin. The words John uses are in the present tense and that means continuous action. It reminds one of the continuous work of the tear ducts in our eyes. Should our tear ducts fail to function, as specks of dirt get into our eyes...think of the problem of possible impairment of vision. But even if tear ducts should fail, the efficacy of the blood of Jesus never fails. It is like a never ending stream. The blood of Jesus, his son, continues to cleanse us from all sin. We meet the same present tense in the first chapter

of John's gospel: Behold the Lamb of God who *continues to bear* away the sin of the world. The present tense meets our needs because we live in the present. We not only need a sacrifice made in the past, we need to know the efficacy of that sacrifice for the present and for the future.

Some of you have undoubtedly read Charles Dicken's **Tale of Two Cities.** You may recall how Sidney Carton takes the place of Charles Darney at the hideous guillotine in Paris. There are two things uppermost in Carton's mind. There is the agony of the moment when he, the Englishman, will be killed in place of the Frenchman. As if by way of Divine encouragement, there comes to his mind the words of Jesus, "I am the resurrection and the life." Shortly before he puts his plan into effect, he walks the streets of Paris and that same word comes to his mind; he carries a tiny girl across a muddy street, and as he deposits her in her mother's arms, he whispers in her ear the same words of Jesus: I am the resurrection and the life. Then, disguised as Charles Darnay and in the place of Charles Darnay, he is carted away to the guillotine and there before the fateful axe falls, encourages another victim with the same words of Jesus. But, there is another thing in Sidney Carton's mind. He reviews realistically not only the agony of the moment, not only the deliverance of another that his death will make possible, he senses the implication of his sacrifice for the present and for the future. He sees the new and happy life of the Darnays, with Mrs. Darnay and her aging father and their little girl Lucy. He even envisions that they may have a young son born to them and they may name that son Sidney; and that Charles Darnay will have a new life of usefulness.

It is a faint picture of our text for the cross meant first of all for Jesus that agony of the moment, the cup drunk to the dregs, the cruelty of the sufferings and the blood that was shed. Yet our Lord Jesus looked down through the ages and saw the continuous power and effect of his work. The writer to the Hebrews says, "For the joy set before him, He endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down on the right hand of God."

To walk in the light means to come to the light. To walk in the light means to know the cleansing of the blood of Jesus. Remember the experience of Job. Though he didn't understand what had happened to him, he tried to defend himself... He did't understand what God was doing and he couldn't understand the cruelty of his friends. Then God revealed himself to him and as he does so, Job says, "I have heard of you by the hearing of my ears, but now mine eyes see you, whereby I abhor myself and repent."

As we see the one who is in the light and we come to the one who is in the light, we experience daily the cleansing of that One who promised the cleansing to us if we come to him in faith.

OUR LIFE IN GOD'S LIGHT: REFLECTIONS OF A RABBI

by

Samuel M. Silver

MEDITATION: JEWISH STYLE

Asked what he liked best about the Jewish service, a youngster replied, "The Silent Medication."

That error may give us an insight into the difference between Judaism and the new cults which stress meditation.

Those groups, which have attracted so many people, including Jews and even some rabbis, give the impression that they have discovered something new: the value of cogitation.

But "consciousness-lifting" is not a patent of the modern gurus and their ilk.

Whatever there is of value in the search for inner quietude can also be found in Judaism.

We meditate at every service. The Jewish Bible and the Talmud urge upon us reflections galore.

But Judaism asks something else. After we meditate we are prompted to follow through with deeds (mitzvot) to improve ourselves and society.

It is imperative that devotions should be followed by "moral medication" that distinguishes our faith and which, to my mind, makes Judaism a more helpful doctrine than any of the cults upon which so many are lavishing time, concentration and money.

Consciousness-lifting is fine, but more important is conscience-lifting. None of the cults are interested in the amelioration of society. Many of them were born in India, where poverty and inequity prevail. Have these cults done anything to improve the conditions there?

If you want to meditate beneficially, ponder Psalm 146 which tells us that Judaism calls not only for focussing on one's navel but for bringing to the world more justice and more assistance for the poor, more liberty and righteousness. There's an agenda worth meditating about: mitzvot and moral mandates are more important than mantras.

Rabbi Samuel Silver is with Temple Sinai in Delray Beach, Florida. A well-known author and lecturer, he is a Trustee of FIP. Among his publications is **Mixed Marriage Between Christians and Jews.**

PSALM 56 AND YOU

It is hard to believe that we are in a generation that never heard of Mary Pickford. She was once a film star. When she grew older she became famous again for a booklet she wrote called "Why Not Try God?" In it the star so successful in her career, addressed herself to people less successful. The theme of her book was "Failure is not falling down; it is staying down."

The cinema heroine was saying that everyone has lapses. Everyone misses once in a while, but just because we have sustained a reverse does not mean that we have failed. A setback can be followed by a comeback, if only we exert ourselves.

The same sentiment can be found in the Bible. For example, read Psalm 56. It is attributed to King David and was supposed to have been written when he was expelled from the country by King Saul and ran away only to be captured by the Phillistines who hated him because of his victory over their giant, Goliath.

Caught between the frying pan and the fire, David is in real trouble. Yet Psalm 56 reads like a victory statement not a document of surrender. "My enemies seek to destroy me," cries David, "but I am not dismayed." Why? Because he trusts in God. Using the energy and ingenuity which the Almighty gave him, David escapes and later becomes king.

From David to Mary Pickford, from the time of the Psalms to the time of June 1967 in the Middle East from the Maccabees to the astronauts, the extra courage available to those bent on benevolent aims has often manifested itself. Oliver Goldsmith said it too when he declared that our greatest glory is not in never falling but in rising every time we fall.

What reverses have you sustained? Don't be discouraged and don't become a prisoner of defeatism. Recoup your strength and start on the comeback. It'll help to read Psalm 56, especially its finale: "Thou hast delivered my soul from death, yea my feet from falling that I may walk before God in the light of the living."

PSALM 21 AND YOU

We have been reading about heart transplants.

Even though this represents the last world in medicine, the idea of a new heart goes back to ancient days, when the prophet said that God could put a new heart into us.

By that the prophet means that you and I can trade our present temperament for a better one . . . that God has empowered us to improve the caliber of our conduct . . . that we can engender within

ourselves a better mood, a more creative set of impulses so as to fashion a better life for ourselves and those entrusted to our loving care.

One technique for the acquisition of a new heart is to read the words of the Bible. I draw your attention to the contents of the 21st Psalm, which glorifies God for granting us a number of gifts, such as life and the ability to bring to fruition some of the desires of our heart. If you would turn to your Bible and re-read the moving words of Psalm 21, you can practically feel the entrance of a new heart into your body. One verse declares: "God's glory is great in victory," and the victory that is celebrated in the Bible is our victory over meanness, over nastiness, over selfishness. When we can achieve this kind of victory we have the equivalent of a new heart and we can ecstasize with the writer of Psalm 21, who concludes: "We sing of Thy great might." May we sing of God's might day and night.

A BEDTIME PRAYER

I wanted to write a prayer for my youngsters to say at bedtime. There are many such prayers. Somehow none satisfied me. So I produced one of my own. After thinking and thinking, I came up with this:

As I go to sleep tonight,
I pray to You with all my might,
Help me be cheerful and bright,
Always be my parents' delight.

Then I was stymied. After much cogitation I came up with a tentative last line: "and teach me to do what's right." But I gave that last line more thought. Teach me to do what's right! Of course we should do what's right. But often we do it because we have to, or because the policeman is watching us, or because we're ashamed to do differently. To do what's right is commendable. But there must be a higher, more praiseworthy stage.

After many days, I came up with the last line I liked, and so my amended, edited prayer goes like this:

As I go to sleep tonight,
I pray to You with all my might,
Help me be cheerful and bright,
Always be my parents' delight,
And teach me to *enjoy* what's right.

Doing what's right is fine; enjoying what's right is true maturity, for then we have attained the point where we derive our pleasure from correct, proper conduct. Everyone wants satisfaction. The test of a true person is what gives him satisfaction. May ours come, thrillingly and tinglingly and joyously, from doing what is right, what will contribute to the fashioning of a better, cleaner world worthy of the presence in it of the spirit of Almighty God.

PSALM 70 AND YOU

Let us turn to the Book of Psalms and study Psalm 70. The Book of Psalms has been described as a series of love letters to God. Each one of the 150 selections describes the feelings of a writer who is engaged in an internal adventure seeking to make something meaningful of his life. In Psalm 70 the writer cries out to God: "Hurry, Lord, and deliver me. Help me, O Almighty One." This is evidence of two conditions which characterize the sensitive person: 1) he knows that he needs help, and 2) he feels there is a source of assistance. The writer refers to those who seek to do him harm. He prays that their evil intentions will be thwarted. It would be well for us to take regular stock of our status in life: we, too, are often threatened, and we too can get help by calling on our inner reserves to do a little better, muster a bit more courage, disprove the bad reports that circulate about us, rectify the bad impressions we may have created. To accomplish this, we can take a leaf from the writer of Psalm 70, who eventually speaks about the joy, and the gladness that came to him from tuning in on the divine wave length. Let us humbly acknowledge our shortcomings and then strive firmly and fervently to cope with them. Before we can help the world grow better we must better ourselves. Isn't that so?

לזכר נשמות
הקדושים שמחרפו על
קדוש השם ה"ל

A WINDOW ON THE INFINITE

THE PENITENT MAGDALEN, by Georges de laTour, ca. 1640.

Here Mary Magdalen rests in the contemplative peace of one who has seen God. Passionless, her jewels discarded, the simplicity of her dress symbolic of her new-found way of life, she is radiant in the reflected glow of The-Light-That-Shines-In-The-Darkness eternally. In this atmosphere of hieratic calm, the quiet repose of her hands on a skull suggests acceptance of death. A flickering candle, twice portrayed, carries out the light-dark dialectic, while a mirror hints at the infinity of God.

M.F.G.

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K.L.H.

CLEARNESS:

K.L.H.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MRS. DOUGLAS STEERE

We met with Dorothy Steere in the sunny living room of her historic house on the Haverford College campus, and asked her to explain to us what Quakers understand by clearness, an aspect of transparency. She served us apple juice and homemade oatmeal cookies, apologizing for the grind of the washing machine in the background. As Mrs. Steere talked about decision-making in the Light of God, her presence became as radiant as the glistening green lawns unfolding beyond her windows.

At noon, Professor Steere came down from his study, where he was working on a new book, invited us to sign this distinguished family's autograph book, and spoke with us about spirituality.

FIP: Perhaps you have had experiences you could tell us about, to help us understand what clearness means.

D: In our business meeting in the Society of Friends we can come into a meeting to discuss an issue and have very different views. There will even be some tensions, and the clerk will say, "I think we need a time of silence," and out of that silence — sometimes it is 15 or 20 minutes — clearness will come. People will say, "yes I understand that," or "I'm willing to accept" that on which most people agree. We are dealing with an issue right now in our meeting where we simply cannot come to any clearness. We will hold it over, and pray to let God come into it, and keep us more open to each other; we pray for openness and the truth. To try to find God's will.

FIP: And you would recognize the truth because the group came to an agreement?

D: It is a trust. Now often times the Clerk will say, "we will just have to table it until another meeting." Meantime, people have hopefully searched their own conscience, waited for clearness personally. We hope that when they come together again there will be a basis for agreement.

FIP: You believe that the truth is accessible. So many people say that it is just subjective, that you can't know the truth.

D: Or it is only yourself speaking.

FIP: I can imagine your sense of relief when you have found clearness. . .

D: Another form of clearness that I think personally is very important is if we are struggling with something and we feel the importance of using our minds to solve the problem or issue we are struggling with, in the end to solve it and to put it away and open ourselves to God.

FIP: Would you have an example of your need for clearness as an individual?

D: Yes I have. I'm at the point in my life now where — I used to do quite a bit of speaking, and I could do it without too much trepidation, and it was something which usually I could enjoy. But, at this time in my life it has become clear to me that that is not my role. My role in life is person to person: where there is sharing. I'm not a spokesperson. I have found it very difficult in recent years to have my voice be the one; so even though requests continue to come in, I'm not going out speaking now. And the reason I know this decision is right is because it is not difficult, because there is *clarity*...

FIP: One has a sense to just follow the decision.

D: It is a feeling — it is an overall sense of trusting—it's an inner knowledge.

FIP: Sometimes when you make a decision, it still worries you.

D: That tends to be one way it will become very clear that this is not where you are being led ... and then maybe you will be led another way...

You always need to examine carefully whether this is, and here again you need clarity — whether or not you are just trying to get out of something. Or whether you are getting a real call. That takes a lot of discerning...

There is also an arrangement called "meetings with friends" — you get a group of friends together to hold up to the light the decision you made or have to make...

We also have a small group of women that comes together to discuss things. We call it worship sharing because it is based in silent worship. People can speak, and they share as much as they can. For instance, we talk about grace or how you use a meeting for worship, and people learn to speak out of the silence. Saying, for instance, "this is a situation that I find difficult." Then the group attempts to help them find the right way to deal with their situation...

FIP: Is one criterion of clearness peace?

D: You do feel a sense of peace, but sometimes you may be wrong. I think you must act on the clarity that you have at that time. At another period, for instance, with slavery in the Society of Friends, it took a long time to correct our Society. The clearness did not come. There were a few people who believed in slavery, although a lot of people helped the slaves in the Society of Friends. It just took a long, long time for the No to come, the absolute NO.

FIP: But it did come. One always thinks of the Quakers as giving women a voice. I wonder if there was a search for clearness, or did it just evolve that women should be allowed to speak in meeting?

D: At one point, George Fox thought that there should be separate meetings for women. I think his real reason for that was that he feared men would dominate the meetings, and he wanted women to have the opportunity to develop their capacities of leadership. It took a long time, because the men tended to take over anyway. Women have come a long way, but still today, there are women who feel we haven't gone far enough. There are lots of feminists in the Friends Society. It takes a lot of clearness for a person to come to these new points of view. It takes the leading of the Spirit...

FIP: Why do you think it takes us so long to hear what the Spirit communicates?

D: Well, God has given us a choice, and so many of us have chosen the lower way, and greed comes in, materialism comes in, short-cuts come in. There are so many ways that make us feel we can get somewhere without going through God on our journey.

FIP: I wonder what advice you would have for us to overcome these short-cuts.

D: I do feel there is a lot more awareness today, a great deal. Just the fact that people spontaneously do these hands-across-the nation; and in spite of the build-up of nuclear arms, many people all over the world know instinctively it's wrong. I don't feel hopeless. I think the worst thing we can do is be hopeless. We just have to trust, because if we don't, we add to the atmosphere of despair. We are too swift in our lives. I realize that one of the things I learned from my mother was to have a special time for prayer. Within activity itself there can be prayer: while you are dusting, changing diapers, or whatever...

FIP: Do you pray more for God's will than for any specific petition?

D: Often when we pray we speak too much, and we don't allow God's will to come to us... I have always had this sense of presence. From the time I was a little girl. Just going into the world and seeing the beauty. There was always this presence of God in nature, in people. The light that shone through people. There were certain people who shone with light. They really did. It is a kind of inner radiance that makes you feel there is something more than just human qualities in them...

FIP: I was wondering if you could give us an example of clearness through marriage.

D: Yes. It was a time when Douglas was asked to take a new position. He was a young man, and he wanted to write, and the position would have been good for him. But it meant finding a new place to live, and we didn't want to move. We loved our apartment. But after much searching together for clearness, it was apparent that this was the right thing to do.

FIP: You had peace about it. This seems to be the test.

D: Yes, yes, and I think that at times when you have made the wrong decision, you try to do the best that you can do, and you have to trust, and then walk in the Light as far as you can.

FIP: And what do you do if you find the decision is really wrong?

D: We do not always discern perfectly. There again it is because the Spirit did not tell us. The Spirit did not get through. The Spirit was blocked by ego, or there was just too much of our own will. Maybe we wanted to do something desperately, a good work. But it wasn't God's will.

FIP: Could you give us an example of clearness in terms of children?

D: Douglas and I have not forced our children into any particular following. There were times when they strayed right away from Quakerism. It came as clarity that we felt we should give them this space.

FIP: Do you think of clearness as a state that we could hope to arrive at in our spiritual growth, like enlightenment, or is it rather a momentary experience that is related to a decision?

D: It is a gentle feeling of rightness; of being led.

FIP: A leading in a very distinct direction?

D: Or an accenting of something you were hesitant about. We can be mistaken. James Nailor, one of the Friends that was working with George Fox, felt that he was led to be almost the Messiah. He was terribly taken with himself. In the end he was punished terribly with hot tongs, and he repented. Whenever a Friend has a concern — if you have a concern toward that Friend — and another Friend tries to help, they may say, "We don't feel clarity." We make that person look back again. If he or she still hasn't gotten clarity, there will be a meeting of Friends to try to solve the problem... It is in the process that the light slowly shows itself.

FIP: People frequently say that when they sit down to pray, anger comes up, or they remember someone they just can't forgive. What would you say to them?

D: It is important to admit that we are angry and I think we have to decide if we are angry at that person or what has happened. You then can go to that person and say, "I care for you but I have been disturbed by this." I've often gone directly to the person I'm unhappy about... There is also that process of taking one's emotions and holding them up in the Light... Just doing this within the Light helps — the Light may reveal to you that this person doesn't deserve your anger. You have to hold your problems up to the Light.

MFG, KLH

The Word of God Brings Us to Clarity

O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.
Thou knowest when I sit down and when I rise up.
Thou discernest my thoughts from afar.
Thou searchest out my path and my lying down,
And art acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue
Lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.
Thou dost beset me behind and before
And layest thy hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain to it.
Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there!
If I make my bed in Sheol thou art there!
If I take the wings of the morning
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea
Even there thy hand shall lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any wicked way in me,
And lead me in the way everlasting.

(Psalm cxxxix. 1-12, 23-24)

* * * * *

Here in the 139th Psalm, a clarified man is speaking. Like the prophet Amos, he has had a vision of the Lord standing beside a wall with a plumb line in his hand. He has recognized the Listener for who he is and gratefully abandoned all concealment. Now he is listened to with a listening that hears as no stethoscope has ever been devised to hear. Now he is known not as he thinks himself to be, not as his friends think him to be, nor as his enemies depict him, but as he is. And with this has come a wave of liberation. Search me, know me, try me, lead me: these are the stages of disclosure and discovery which the Psalmist has revealed. To speak to a Listener from whom it becomes progressively clear that nothing can be concealed; to talk on and on before such a Listener until our silence answers his, until disclosure and discovery come, is a longing that is so universal that it could be called one of the "givens" of all human experience.

from **On Listening to Another**
by Douglas Steere

BUDDHA NATURE

One can get fire if one holds a lens between the sun and moxa, but where does the fire come from? The lens is at an enormous distance from the sun; but the fire certainly appears upon the moxa by means of the lens. But if the moxa would not have the nature to kindle, there would be no fire.

In like manner, if the light of Buddha's Wisdom is concentrated upon the human mind, its true nature, which is Buddhahood, will be enkindled, and its light will illumine the minds of the people by its brightness, and will awaken faith in Buddha. He holds the lens of Wisdom before all human minds and thus their faith may be enkindled.

Often people diregard the affinity of their true minds for Buddha's enlightened wisdom, and, because of it, are caught by the entanglement of wordly passions, becoming attached to the discrimination of good and evil, and then lamenting over their bondage and suffering.

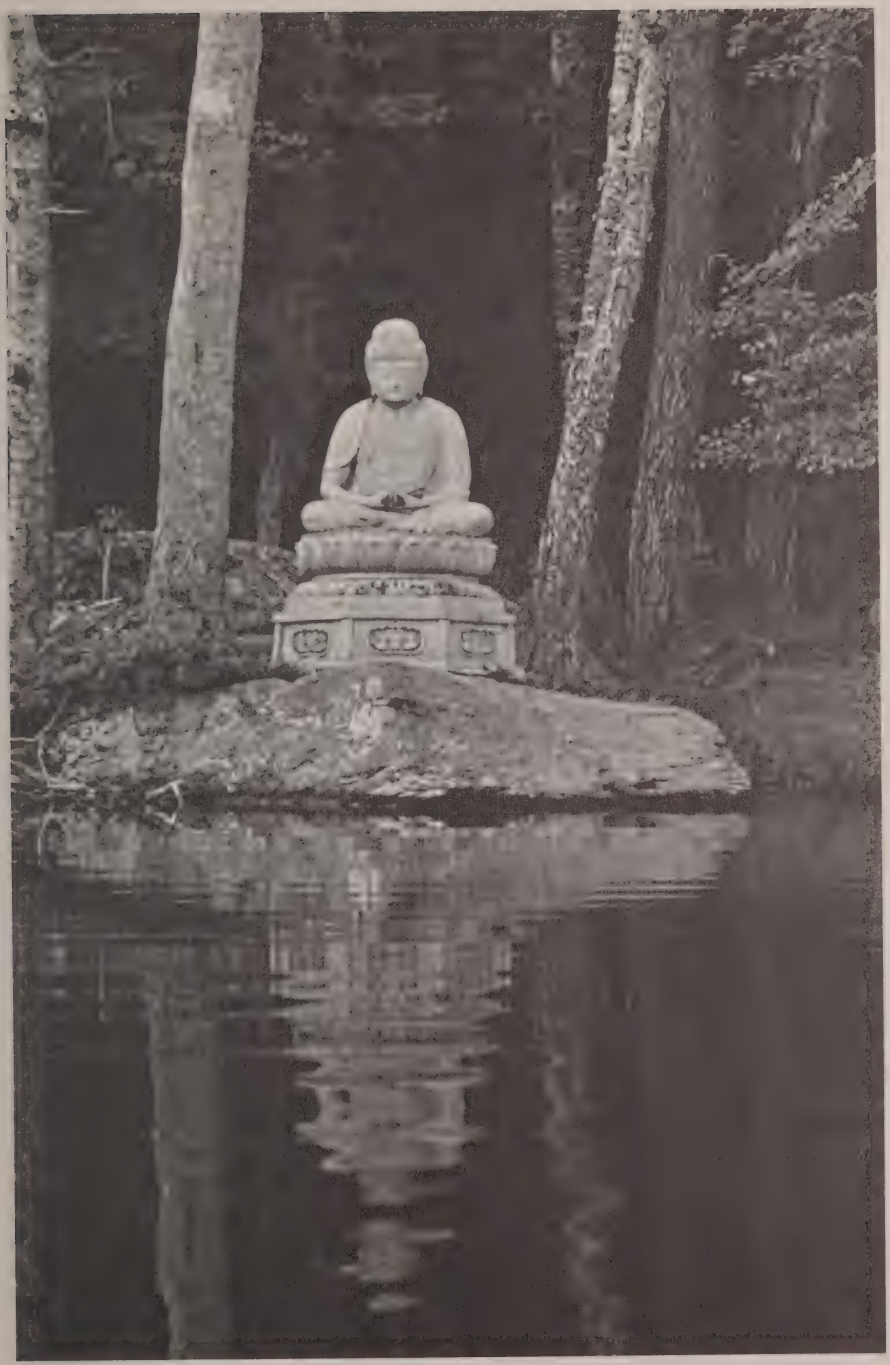
Why is it that people, possessing this fundamental and pure mind, should still cling to false imageries and doom themselves to wander about in a world of delusion and suffering, while all about them is the light of Buddha's Wisdom?

Once upon a time a man looked into the reverse side of a mirror and, not seeing his face and head, he became insane. How unnecessary it is for a man to become insane merely because he carelessly looks into the reverse side of a mirror!

It is just as foolish and unnecessary for a person to go on suffering because he does not attain Enlightenment where he expects to find it. There is no failure in Enlightenment; the failure lies in those people who, for a long time, have sought Enlightenment in their discriminating minds, not realizing that theirs are not true minds but are imaginary minds that have been caused by the accumulation of greed and illusions overlaying and hiding their true minds.

If the accumulation of false imageries is cleared away, Enlightenment will appear. But, strange enough when people attain Enlightenment, they will realize that without false imageries there could be no Enlightenment.

from **The Teaching of Buddha**
by Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai



To Die In Christ

CHAPLAIN MAGOR'S FAREWELL

by William Brower

I knew Warren "Spike" Magor only slightly. He came to Princeton Seminary (where I teach) in the mid-sixties for the Master of Theology degree. But now, knowing the story of Spike's death, I will never forget him. His dying was painful, his courage in dying was exemplary, and his funeral was unforgettable. Here is the story.

When they told Chaplain (Captain) Spike Magor, U.S.N., that he was terminal, he knew right away how he wanted to spend his last year, or month, or whatever he had left. For years he had lectured on death and dying, helping people face the end with faith and hope instead of doubt and despair. Now it was his turn, and he was ready.

"Sign me on for chaplain in the Naval Hospital. I'll follow the doc's orders like a good sailor, but I want to be serving."

Spike had been both pastor and military man for all of his professional career. He began duty as a Navy chaplain in June 1960, a month after he was ordained by the Presbytery of Long Island. Now he wanted to continue as an *active* chaplain until his body was wasted and ready for the "deep six." Somehow he arranged to get that unusual patient-pastor duty. He had been staff chaplain under the Commander, Naval Surface Force, United States Pacific Fleet, when the diagnosis came through: multiple myeloma. Just the shock of that news would undo many of us. Spike's response was, "Let's make the best of it."

Shore headquarters of ComNavSurfPac is at San Diego, so Spike requested duty at the hospital there. His last assignment: Chaplain, Pastoral Care Service, Navy Regional Medical Center (and, inciden-

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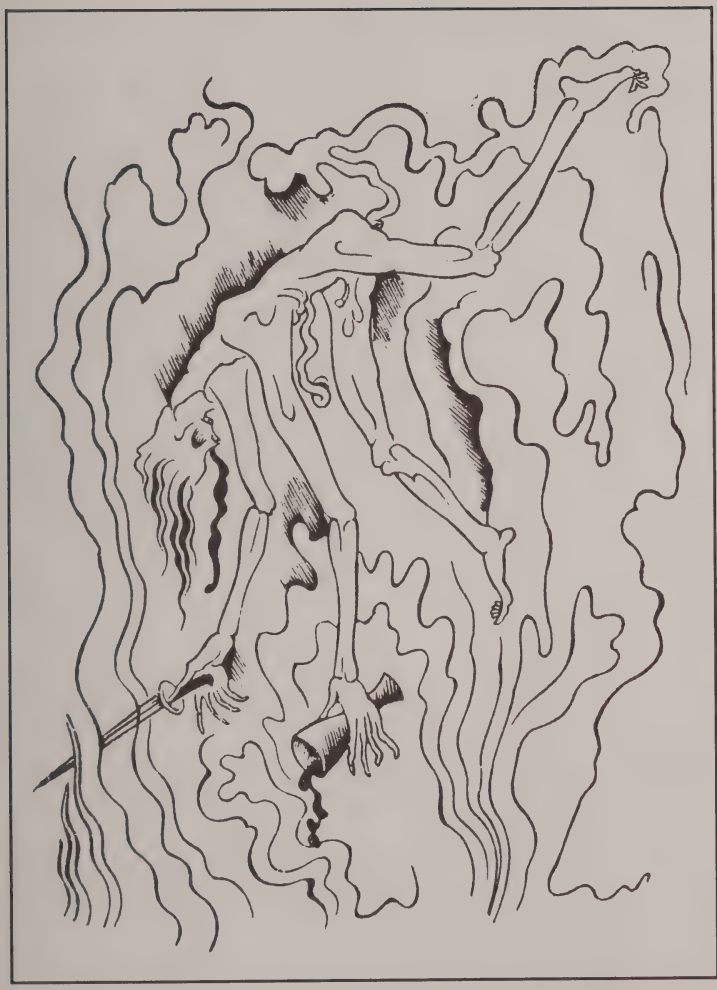
William Brower was a professional actor before joining the faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1954. He publishes short stories and poetry, and delights audiences across the country with his presentation of "A Friendly Visit with Robert Frost." His annual poetry-reading is a highlight of Princeton life.



DEATH BE NOT PROUD, from THE HOLY SONNETS OF JOHN DONNE by Eric Gill, 1938.

tally, in-patient for treatment of multiplel myeloma). He served as pastor to his fellow patients — the ill, the troubled, the dying — until he died there on October 12, 1979.

Chaplain Spike was forty-six when he passed away. During nearly twenty years of ministry, he had also married and raised three children. A graduate of Lafayette, he had served as a Marine Corps infantry officer before going to Union Seminary in New York. His tour in Vietnam was with the First Marine Division, and he came back with a Bronze Star and the Navy Commendation Medal. His final posts before San Diego were at the Portsmouth Naval Prison, and then Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where he served as senior chaplain.

What made Spike's last months unique were these two things: the service to his fellow patients even as the myeloma did its deadly work, and the service of committal at his graveside which ended in such an amazing way. This remarkable man had arranged the funeral's "special effect" because, in addition to his pastor's heart, he had a faith in the resurrection that gave him an inspired idea for witness.

The service was at Arlington National Cemetery, that awe-inspiring place in northern Virginia in sight of the Washington Monument. Thousands of veterans lie buried there, of all ranks and ratings — some famous, some obscure, some unknown. Visitors may be most familiar with the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, President Kennedy's grave, or the nearby Iwo Jima memorial with its starkly powerful bronze figures raising the flag over huge fragments of granite. But the whole cemetery has the quality of one vast shrine. Wherever you stand within it, you feel enveloped in a sacred atmosphere. The Civil War poet, Theodore O'Hara, sensed the aura — "On Fame's eternal camping ground their silent tents are spread."

On the day Spike Magor was buried there, the funeral cortege wound slowly to the interment site. A military honor guard stood by, and a bugler waited on a ridge to the west. As the ceremony proceeded, the friends who were present could anticipate every part; it was a familiar order of service, military style. But Spike had directed that something special be added. The readings and prayers went in orderly fashion and finally, on the nearby westerly ridge the bugler sounded Taps. As the last note died, and all seemed finished, the rousing sound of Reveille rang out! A second bugler had been placed on a ridge to the east. His bugle spoke, in the brisk musical metaphor or Reveille, the faith of Chaplain Magor.

As the mourners listened in amazement to the dramatic liturgical "extra" Spike had requested, a joyous mood swept over them. No wonder I could never forget him, and no wonder I will always be grateful to him. The thought of that Reveille sounded on the ridge at Arlington will always tell me again, "Rise and shine! The ressurection is real! Death is swallowed up in victory!"

THE GOD BEYOND GOD

by Mary Ford Grabowsky

How do you picture God? Do you see a pair of loving arms, an ocean or an everlasting rock? Perhaps nothing at all? According to Ana-Maria Rizzuto, a physician and neo-Freudian psychoanalyst practicing in Boston, our images of God may resemble our mother and father more than the living God.

Rizzuto writes in **The Birth of the Living God** that most of us tend to project our experience with our parents onto our image of God. The process of superimposing subjective material onto our God-representation not only distorts our current understanding of the Divinity, it also interferes with our spiritual experience, making it difficult to recognize a real encounter with God for what it is. As Paul Tillich wrote, we become blind and deaf to "the God beyond god," mistaking god (written with a lower case "g") for the truly existing God (spelled with a capital "G")

Rizzuto reached her conclusions by administering to hundreds of subjects two questionnaires, one asking questions about God, the other questions about parents. Analyzing the data, Rizzuto discovered that similar language appeared on both of a subject's answer sheets. For example, a woman reporting in the God-test that the deity seemed distant and uninvolved in her life said in her parent-test that her mother and father had always seemed remote and unconcerned with her. A man who described God as close and loving portrayed his parents as similarly warm and near. Another subject who found it difficult to sustain belief in God for more than a short period of time described his parents as inconsistent and unreliable. And more than one person who expressed awareness of being held in the "arms of God" remembered childhood in terms of a parent's comforting embrace.

Rizzuto found the pattern of parallel imagery in a majority of her subjects' responses to the two tests. This finding led her to conclude that there exists in the human psyche a tendency to formulate an image of God out of parental material. The evidence showed that the human God-image may be based on either one dominant parent, or on both parents, (not just on the father, as Freud contended). In some of Rizzuto's cases, the mother loomed in the projection; at other times, the father; in still other instances, traces of both parents were evident.

Rizzuto learned also that our image of God is shaped by both real and fantasized exchanges with parents. Not only our actual experience with our mother and father enters into the construct, but also elements of wished-for, imagined, and idealized parents.

According to Rizzuto, a child begins to build a God-representation as early as 2 or 3, and the picture is more or less complete by the end of the oedipal era. The formation of this god-image is what Rizzuto means by "the Birth of the Living God." By the time a child is old enough to attend school and church, she already has her "private god" in hand, an ersatz god substituting for the really existing God. Which means, if Rizzuto is right, that the religious teachings of church and society influence our knowledge of God in only a secondary way. The fundamental formation takes place in the home.

In some of Rizzuto's cases, there was no significant overlap between God language and parental descriptions. That is, the words used by a small percentages of subjects in reference to God were different from the words with which they recalled their parents. How did Rizzuto account for the deviation of these people from the rest of the people tested?

She found that life experience had led the subjects who differed from the norm to "update" their image of God. They had "re-worked" their understanding of the Deity. Often a crisis, like the death of a relative or the loss of a job, had brought about the re-evaluation. Times of transition, also, like a move or major decision, had stimulated questions, and caused them to re-think their religious positions. Often they became conscious that their image of God was anachronistic. Their adult experience of the divine Reality had out-stepped their childish pictures, and needed to be integrated into an adult belief system. Rizzuto cites the case of a priest who took part in her research. When first tested, his image of God as a stern and critical judge was easily traceable to the harsh side of his father's personality: on the two questionnaires, God and father were equally vindictive. In therapy with Rizzuto, however, the priest was able to discard the artificial notion shaped in childhood, and to bring his thinking about God into conformity with his actual spiritual experience.

Rizzuto's work on the divine image has important implications not only for men and women who believe in God and may need to update their religious images, but also for those who profess no belief in God at all. Her evidence suggests that everyone has an image of God. Where there is no *conscious* image of God, as in the case of an agnostic or atheist, an *unconscious* image is nevertheless present. The divine image has merely been repressed, for whatever reason, into the unconscious mind. This hypothesis leads Rizzuto to interpret conversion experiences as derepression of a God-representation.

As to the implications of this research for people who have religious faith, it calls us to ponder our pictures of God. Do our convictions reflect outdated memories, or are we in touch with "the God beyond god," the living loving Deity who eternally transcends our limited images?

CAUGHT UP IN THE SPIRIT

by

Robert S. MacLennan

Several years ago I served on the staff of a large Presbyterian Church in Lincoln, Nebraska. I had only 3½ years experience as a minister in the Church when I moved from New York to the plains of Nebraska.

One afternoon I was walking downtown with the other Associate Minister and talking about the much publicized Charismatic Movement and its effect on the Christians in main-line churches. The Charismatic Movement was made up of Christians who had an experience of the Holy Spirit usually expressed with unusual powers — like speaking in tongues, or internal feelings of the presence of God — or some powerful experience of *healing.* It was a strange but familiar "movement" to me since most of my life I had known people who were involved in healings, speaking in tongues, visions, "born again" and second birth experiences. I was familiar with these words and experiences, but throughout it certainly did not fit my view of Christian faith.

But instead of dismissing it, I have always tried to listen carefully to what people were trying to tell me about their "second birth" (as they called their encounter with the Holy Spirit). I watched, I listened, I wondered as I encountered these people in various circles. I was also involved personally in some ways in the movement. I went to a Charismatic Conference, for instance, with hundreds of people who had "received the gifts of the Spirit". I defended a fellow minister before a Committee of Presbytery who was about to be kicked out of his Church by his Session because he was "speaking in tongues" in the worship service during his prayers. I attended "prayer and praise" services where people spoke in tongues, sang in tongues, prayed in tongues — All the time WONDERING how real this was, how healthy it was. I was trying to evaluate this experience in the light of my understanding of the Biblical presentation of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples on that Day! Was I in the midst of a second Pentecost, another "Era of the Spirit" as one Charismatic Theologian wrote? (R. Williams)

Robert MacLennan is Pastor of Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in Scarsdale, New York, and a doctoral candidate working on the intertestamental period. Last week, the church in which he preached this sermon on May 18 of this year, burned to the ground.

In a less formal way, I have listened over the years to the stories of people who have had other spiritual experiences they have described either as "encounters with Jesus" or being "baptized with the Holy Spirit" or "second births". Most of these people shared these experiences with me in private because they were too embarassed to talk about them in other settings or groups, afraid that they would not be understood. They were afraid that their fellow Christians would reject them. They are people who themselves do not go in for super spiritual experiences. They are not considered by their friends as especially pious or particularly religious. But they had an experience of God's Spirit and wanted to tell me about it. I listened.

As I walked with my colleague in downtown Lincoln that day talking about this Charismatic Movement, telling him my views, he turned to me and said, "Bob, you are cheating people by not exploring with them this dimension of the Holy Spirit, this dimension of an experience with God. It is for everyone, not just some. It is to be experienced by everyone who follows Jesus Christ."

Needless to say, I was upset with my colleague's comments. [I did not think of myself as one who was "cheating my parishioners" but as one who was trying to make available all the resources we have as Christians! Anyway, I had just begun my work in the Church and felt that I could learn something new from this senior associate. (He

was then about 45 years old, I was 28 — so he was an old man in my eyes).]

Was I missing something? Do we as Christians live in a "ho-hum, country-club-esque Christianity" that is life-less, empty, without any real meaning? or power? What does it mean to be caught up in the Spirit? Are we missing something? Is there a power we are not taking into our lives that can transform us?

As I thought about these questions I came to this little episode in the last book of the Bible, **Revelation!** Here John is on Patmos and has an overwhelming experience of God. What is it? What happens to him? How does he describe this encounter? How was he caught up in the Spirit?

First, he had an ECSTATIC experience. He "stood outside" of himself, that's one meaning of being "in the Spirit". I know that I can be so self-preoccupied, so bound to negative images of myself, so locked inside myself that a major spiritual and psychological breakthrough comes at those moments I step back and take a long look at myself. When I move out of my self-preoccupation, my self deprecation, my negative self image and simply look at it all from outside: This is partly what it means to be "in the Spirit" — to stand outside of myself.

We can look at ourselves from the perspective of the Spirit of God. This *freedom* to see ourselves as if we were looking in from outside is a gift of the Spirit.

Therefore, I would suggest that when someone helps me gain a perspective on myself, when someone frees me to step back and see myself, or see something about myself, that is the work of God's Spirit — We are "in the Spirit, we are experiencing in some way the Holy Spirit, a gift — a Charisma of God. This can happen when a friend tells us the truth! This can happen when a psychiatrist or counselor touches the core of our inner thoughts. This can happen when a little child simply makes us face our behavior in some way! To be "in the Spirit", to have an experience of the Spirit is to have an experience of standing outside of ourselves.

Next, John turns around and sees an awesome heavenly person, who happens to be the kingly Son of Man. This is simply an encounter with Jesus.

I was troubled by my beliefs when I was in Seminary — and in many ways I always will question — but I remember a loving friend — who was also my mentor — telling me that my SEARCH FOR GOD is a sign that I am close to God. This friend told me, "You are intimately involved in God, Bob, when you ask your questions, cry out for some answers from the silent God. Your search indicates your intimacy with God." That has always stuck with me. I would not be on a journey if there was no One there! This spiritual quest is, for me, my turning around and seeing the Son of Man.

I have listened carefully these last couple of years as some of you have told me about your own encounters with the Divine Presence. Some have told me that you did not know how you would manage when the inevitable crisis struck! You did not see how you could make it through tragedy, or pain, or the loss of life — And then in the midst of it *all,* when the foundations seemed to shake, and the house you had built seemed to collapse — you reported that for some reason, in some way "the grace of God was, indeed, sufficient for all your needs." The Presence of the Lord was real to you! "God was there all the time, I just did not realize it."

You and I experience the presence of God when we seek God, when we question God's existence, or God's care for us. It is not only in tongues, or through healing powers, or even visions that qualify us for living in the Spirit, it is also in the experience we have when, in the midst of our experiences we meet God.

One more image impresses me as I ponder John's experience of the Spirit. God is experienced in the midst of the Church, in this community of faith.

I often hear people tell me that they have been wooed into faith because of the way the Christian family has treated them.

I find the Church to be a gift of the Spirit. This community of faith has always been a context for an encounter with God — if I allow myself to be moved by, challenged by, healed by, encouraged by this part of Christ's Church, time and time again I discover the living Christ.

"Something's been happening to me in this place," a friend told me the other day. "It is not just in worship but the atmosphere, the questions we raise, the respect we have for each other here." That friend is experiencing what each one of us here can experience: the presence of God.

So I must take another walk with my friend and colleague, and perhaps broaden our discussion a bit about the Charismatic Movement. The Spirit does influence each of us in a unique way. We may not have certain types of experiences of the Holy Spirit considered by some to be the real gifts, but we do have many experiences of the Spirit. We may experience the Spirit when we are helped to "stand outside of ourselves". We experience the presence of God in our lives *within* this community of faith, in fellowship with each other through worship, study, fellowship and service! We experience being caught up in the Spirit; we experience Pentecost throughout our routine!

ILLUMINATION

Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer, by Rembrandt, 1653.

The Spirituality of the Light dominates this reflective scene. The philosopher's wisdom and the poet's inspiration relate as complements in a glancing light symbolic of the divine rays in which God communicates with humanity. Dense shadow in the background and the thoughtful bent of Aristotle's head convey a mood of religious heaviness that contrasts with the outward tranquillity of the setting. One senses the image of God—the highest degree of human mentality and spirit—shining within the figures of both Homer and Aristotle.

M.F.G.

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IN MEMORIAM: MARGARET RUTH THOMAS (1905-1986)

We report to you with sorrow the recent death of Margaret Ruth Thomas, an advisor of Fellowship In Prayer since 1978 and long-time friend of our co-founder, Kathryn G. Brown.

Miss Thomas was born in Missouri on July 19, 1905, obtained her B.S. from Northern Missouri State Teacher's College in 1926, and an M.A. from Teacher's College of Colorado University in 1932. She taught and chaired the English Department of Valley High School for thirty years. After retiring, Miss Thomas worked in Nigeria for two years as an Ohio University Associate Professor of English. While there, she became the Public Relations Coordinator for the Ohio project, publishing the "Nigerian Outlook," and traveled extensively throughout Africa. She had the opportunity to visit with Albert Schweitzer a few days before his 89th birthday.

Miss Thomas served on numerous boards and held many offices in social and service organizations at both the state and national levels. She became, for example, the national representative to the United Nations of the Business and Professional Women's Club, and was also the charter president of the Soroptimists International (a service club of 50,000 women executives from fifty nations). As representative of the BPW and the Soroptimists, she held consultative status at the U.N. As a member of the Steering Committee of Women United, the women's organization of the U.N., she was sent on numerous speaking tours throughout the United States.

Her work and travels enabled Miss Thomas to meet such internationally well-known people as U. Thant, Dag Hammerskjold, and Kurt Waldheim, as well as Eleanor Roosevelt, Helen Hayes, and Countess Alexandria Tolstoi.

In quiet moments at home, Miss Thomas loved to garden, sew, and cook for her many friends. She gave unstintingly of her time and energy to further the work of Fellowship In Prayer. She arranged for meetings in her home of influential friends from around the country whom she interested in our ministry, and was responsible for our special issue on "Rova Farm." In addition, she remembered Fellowship In Prayer in her will, for which we are deeply grateful.

Since Miss Thomas' death on May 22, tributes to her talents and generosity have poured in from around the world.

We at Fellowship In Prayer extend heartfelt condolences to the family of Margaret Ruth Thomas. We share your loss and grief.

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE LIGHT

"So I entered the place where I usually prayed and, mindful of the words of the holy man I began to say, 'Holy God.' At once I was so greatly moved to tears and loving desire for God that I would be unable to describe in words the joy and delight I then felt. I fell prostrate on the ground, and at once I saw, and behold, a great light was immaterially shining on me and seized hold of my whole mind and soul, so that I was struck with amazement at the unexpected marvel and I was, as it were, in ecstasy. Moreover I forgot the place where I stood, who I was, and where, and could only cry out, 'Lord, have mercy,' so that when I came to myself I discovered that I was reciting this: I conversed with this Light. The Light itself knows it; it scattered whatever mist there was in my soul and cast out every earthly care. It expelled from me all material denseness and bodily heaviness that made my members to be sluggish and numb. What an awesome marvel! It so invigorated and strengthened my limbs and muscles, which had been faint through great weariness, that it seemed to me as though I was stripping myself of the garment of corruption. Besides, there was poured into my soul in unutterable fashion a great spiritual joy and perception and a sweetness surpassing every taste of visible objects, together with a freedom and forgetfulness of all thoughts pertaining to this life. In a marvelous way there was granted to me and revealed to me the manner of the departure from this present life. Thus all the perceptions of my mind and my soul were wholly concentrated on the ineffable joy of that Light."

Symeon the New Theologian

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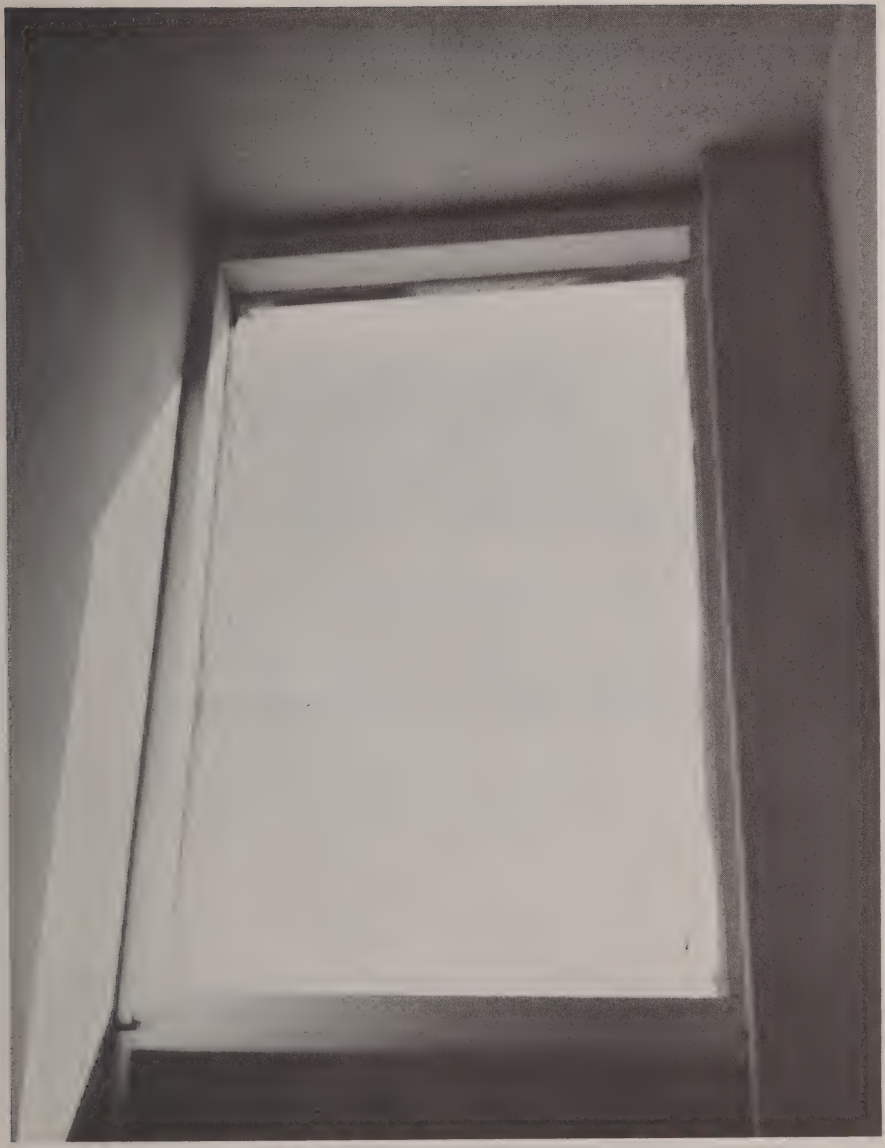


The Light that I see is not bordered in space. It is far, far lighter than a cloud shining in the sun. Neither height nor length nor breadth pertain to it. It is made known to me as the shadow of the Living Light. And just as the sun, moon, and stars are mirrored in water, so do scriptures, utterances, and powers . . . shine in it . . . Sometimes in this Light, but not often, I see another Light, made known to me as the Living Light. When and how I see it, I am unable to say. But when I do see it, all sorrow and all anxiety are taken away from me. And I feel like a young girl instead of an old woman.

Hildegard of Bingen

* * * * *

I heard the doctors say that I was dead, and that's when I began to feel as though I were tumbling, actually kind of floating, through this blackness, which was some kind of enclosure. There are not really words to describe this. Everything was very black, except that, way off from me, I could see this light. It was a very, very brilliant light, but not too large at first. It grew larger as I came nearer and nearer to it.

I was trying to get to that light at the end, because I felt that it was Christ, and I was trying to reach that point. It was not a frightening experience. It was more or less a pleasant thing. For immediately, being a Christian, I had connected the light with Christ, who said, "I am the light of the world." I said to myself, "If this is it, if I am to die, then I know who waits for me at the end, there in that light."

from **Life After Life**
by Raymond Moody

* * * * *

I was reading a book. The house was quiet and the family had gone to bed. It was a stressful time in my life, and I had been putting more time than usual into prayer. Suddenly, the room became bright, then brighter, as though some great source of light had been turned on and were filling the space all around me and my mind and body. It was overwhelming. I was stunned. It only lasted about a half hour, but it gave me a sense of the holy that has never left me in twenty-two years. It took away my fear of death. It gave me absolute certitude that God exists.

A business man.

MEMORIAL

In the year of grace 1654
Monday, 23 November, the day of St. Clement,
Pope and Martyr, and others in the Roman Martyrology,
the eve of St. Chrysogonus, Martyr, and others, etc. . . .
From about half-past ten in the evening
Till about half an hour after midnight

FIRE

God of Abraham. God of Isaac. God of Jacob
not of the philosophers and the learned.
Certitude joy certitude emotion sight joy
God of Jesus Christ
Deum meum et Deum vestrum.
Thy God shall be my God.
Forgetfulness of the world and of everything other
than God

ECSTASIS: WORDS NO MAN CAN UTTER

He can be found only in the ways taught
in the Gospel. *Greatness* of the human soul.
Good Father, the world has not known
Thee, but I have known Thee.
Joy Joy Joy and tears of joy
I have separated myself from Thee
Dereliquerunt me fontem
my God wilt Thou leave me
let me not be eternally separated from Thee
They have life eternal, they that know Thee
Sole true God and He Whom Thou has sent
Jesus Christ
Jesus Christ
I have separated myself from Him I have fled renounced
crucified Him

Pascal

PRAYERS

O everlasting Light, far surpassing all created things, send down the beams of Your brightness from above, and purify, gladden, and illuminate in me all the inward corners of my heart. Quicken my spirit with all its powers, that it may cleave fast and be joined to You in joyful gladness of *spiritual rapture.* Oh, when will that blessed hour come when You will visit me and gladden me with Your blessed presence, so that You are to me all in all. As long as that gift is not given me, there will be in me no full joy.

Thomas a Kempis

O abyss! O eternal Godhead! O deep sea! What more could you have given me than the gift of your very self?

You are a fire always burning but never consuming; you are a fire consuming in your heat all the soul's selfish love; you are a file lifting all chill and giving lights. In your light you have made me know your truth: You are that light beyond all light who gives the mind's eye supernatural light in such fullness and perfection that you bring clarity even to the light of faith. In that faith I see that my soul has life, and in that light receives you who are Light.

In the light of faith I gain wisdom in the wisdom of the Word your Son; in the light of faith I am strong, constant, perservering; in the light of faith I have hope: It does not let me faint along the way. This light teaches me the way, and without this light I would be walking in the dark. This is why I asked you, eternal Father, to enlighten me with the light of most holy faith.

Catherine of Siena

Serene Light, shining in the ground of my being,
draw me to Yourself!
Draw me past the snares of the senses,
out of the mazes of the mind.
Free me from symbols, from words,
that I may discover
the Signified,
the Word Unspoken,
in the darkness that veils the ground of my being,
Serene Light!

Anonymous

I meditate upon the stainless One, Whose splendour is that of a thousand rising Suns, Whose eyes are like Fire, Sun and Moon.

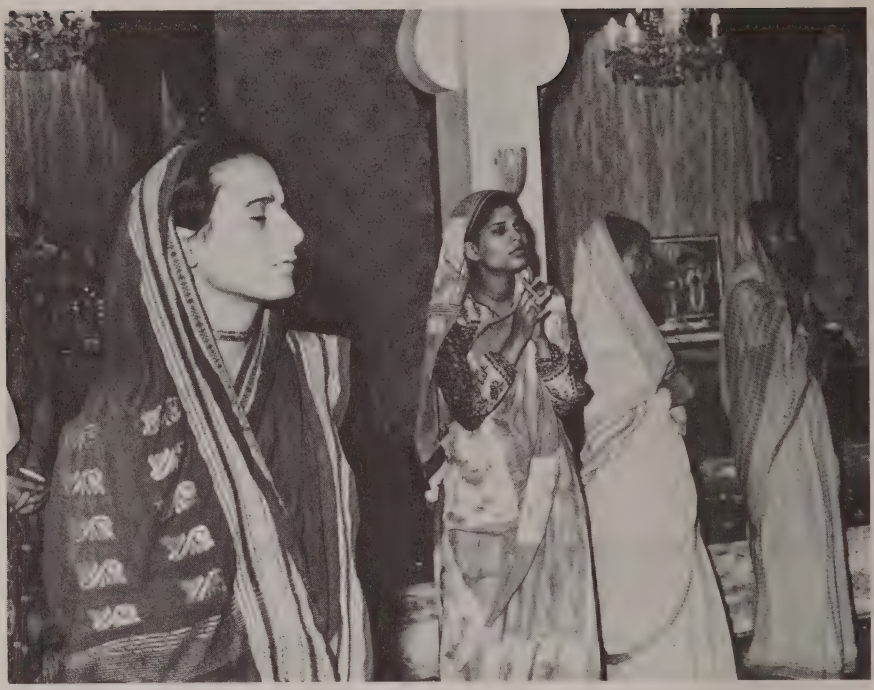
Tantra of the Great Liberation

O eternal Truth and true Love and beloved Eternity! You are my God, to you I sigh day and night. And when I first knew you, you lifted me up so that I might see that there was something to see but that I was not yet the man to see it. And you beat back the weakness of my gaze, shining on me too strongly, and I trembled with love and dread. And I knew myself to be far from you in the region of unlikeness, as if I heard your voice from on high: "I am the food of strong men and women: grow and you will feed on me; nor will you change me like ordinary food into your flesh, but you will be changed into me."

Augustine of Hippo

Trinity, superessential and superdivine and supergood guardian of Christian knowledge of God, direct thou us into the more-than-unknown and superluminous and most sublime summit of mystical eloquence, where new and absolute and unchangeable mysteries of theology are deeply hidden, according to the superluminous darkness of instructive silence—darkness which is supermanifest and superresplendent, and in which all is aglow, pouring out upon the invisible intellects the splendors of invisible goodness.

Pseudo-Dionysius



BOOKS WE HAVE ENJOYED

The House of the Soul and **Concerning The Inner Life,** by Evelyn Underhill (Minneapolis: The Seeburg Press, $8.50).

In these two works by one of the great writers of our century, christological mysticism is made readily accessible to the average reader concerned with the spiritual life. Underhill is a consummate scholar whose profound intuitive penetration into the deepest mysteries of religious faith has won for her well-deserved recognition as a spiritual guide. In these two writings, she urges her readers to practice the virtues exemplified by Christ. "There is a work which God requires to be done by each one of us," she writes, and this task should be performed in the presence of God with faith and love.

M.F.G.

* * * * *

Shambhala: the Sacred Path of the Warrior, by Chogyam Trungpa (Boulder, Col.: Shambhala, 1984, $6.95).

From the meditation master who founded the Naropa Institute and Shambhala Training Centers, comes an elegant sequel to **Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism** and **The Myth of Freedom.** A recognized authority in both psychology and sprirituality, Trungpa combines these two disciplines to offer his readers a simple, if not easy way to grow toward openness and responsible relatedness. Through the regular practice of meditation, he writes, one finds not only freedom and dignity, but also the "natural source of radiance and brilliance" that illumines the world.

M.F.G.

* * * * *

Hadewijch, The Complete Works (N.Y.: Paulist Press, 1980, $7.95).

This eloquent volume in the Classics of Western Spirituality series

contains the mystical love lyrics and letters of a 13th century Beguine who seems to have been evicted from her community because of her doctrine of love. She taught that the soul is a way for the passage of God from the divine depths into liberty, and conversely, that God is a way for the passage of the soul into its liberty in God. Ironically, the ecstatic quality of her writing contributed to both her rejection by her contemporaries and her growing fame today. In Hadewijch, lyrical and spiritual mastery combine to create brilliant works surpassing by far the poetry of courtly love popular in her era.

M.F.G.

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The Road Less Travelled, A New Psychology of Love, Traditional Values, and Spiritual Growth, by M. Scott Peck, M.D. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978, $8.95).

What does it cost and give to face the conditions of one's life honestly? M. Scott Peck, a practicing psychiatrist, gives us an exhaustive definition of the healthy necessity to face the inevitable challenges of living. By facing reality, by defining loving as a process distinct from the myths of romantic love, by enlarging our boundaries, we will continue to grow spiritually. Dr. Peck describes thoroughly and gracefully how all these growing aspects are interrelated and encouraged by a loving God. This book would be useful as a group study guide.

K.L.H.

* * * * *

Reality and Radiance, Selected Autobiographical Works of Emilia Fogelkou, translated by Howard T. Lutz (Richmond: Friends United Press, 1985, $10.95).

In 1901 Sweden, Emilia Fogelkou became the only religion teacher at an experimental high school. The job increasingly frustrated and depressed her as she realized that the heart of religion cannot be conveyed by an academic course. She underwent a spiritual transformation, "the wellspring experience," which confirmed Emilia's sense of the deeper reality of an inward relationship to God. Her personal seeking led her to complete a university degree in 1909 when "for the first time there was among the candidates in theology one who was a woman." Her attempts to allow that inner reality to cast radiance through the decisions of a difficult life make up this inspiring autobiographical account.

K.L.H.

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Since 1949 the purpose of Fellowship in Prayer is to promote the practice of prayer among all religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice, and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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As of this issue, Mary Ford-Grabowsky becomes Editor of "Fellowship in Prayer." She has a Ph.D. in Theology, Psychology, and Spirituality from Princeton Theological Seminary, and an M.Div. with a concentration in Pastoral Counseling, also from Princeton Seminary. Dr. Ford-Grabowsky is a former college teacher who publishes in her field and reads eight languages.

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